

REMARKS

In the Office Action, claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8-13, 25 and 28-33 were rejected and claims 7 and 27 were objected to. With this Amendment, claims 1 and 2 have been amended, claims 7 and 27 have been canceled, and claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8-13, 25, and 28-33 are pending. Claims 14-24, 34, 36, and 38-40 were previously withdrawn from consideration, and claims 4, 26, 35, and 37 were previously canceled. No new matter has been added with this Amendment.

Allowable Claims

In the Office Action, claims 7 and 27 were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form. With this amendment, claims 1 and 2 have been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claims 7 and 27, respectively. Claims 7 and 27 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Therefore, claims 1 and 2 are in condition for allowance.

35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8-13, 25 and 28-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on WO 00/55876 and on U.S. Pat. No. 5,629,829. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections. However, in an effort to advance this case to allowance, claims 1 and 2 have been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claims 7 and 27, respectively. In the subject Action, claims 7 and 27 were indicated to be allowable. Accordingly, claims 1 and 2 are now in condition for allowance. Claims 3, 5, 6, 8-13, 25, and 28-33 depend from allowable independent claims 1 and 2, and are therefore also allowable. Applicant does not otherwise concede the correctness of the Examiner's rejection and reserves the right to make additional arguments as may be necessary. Further, Applicant reserves the right to pursue the remaining subject matter in continuation applications.

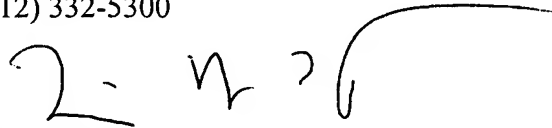
Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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